

Saw him - & Mr. Simion, the feeble is  
still about, & even active - 85 years, being  
considered - My dear Herbie is well &  
getting on satisfactorily at College - He  
is now a "Junior Sixth" - His being  
of age, will probably be a prospect  
next year - By the way - if you read the  
English papers, you will have seen the  
absurd exaggerations - not to say false-  
hoods, on the subject of "Winchester Dis-  
cipline" - For myself, I have felt no  
anxiety, being well convinced that a  
School which for upwards of 500 years,  
has produced - & continues to send out  
the first men in the land, cannot have  
any thing very objectionable in the  
management, or discipline - I have also  
a very high respect for the Head, and  
several Masters - both well known to me.  
There are some 20 others, of whom I  
know little, personally - In the present  
Cabinet (of 16 Ministers) 6 or 7 are Wyke-  
hamists - including the late & present Lord  
Chancellor. My dear Herbie is still  
deaf - more especially of one ear, but he  
makes good progress, especially in the  
Paper examinations, with which his  
infirmity does not interfere -

10 - Paragon - Mackheath,  
S.F.  
11<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> 1872.

My dear Gray, I see by my Mem<sup>a</sup>  
that I wrote to your dear, good  
wife, in July 1871 (!) / since which  
I have heard nothing of your news.  
I only mention this as a fact, & certain-  
ly not as matter of complaint, for I  
know how busy you both are, & in  
the matter of regular Correspondence,  
even with loved & cherished friends, I  
am very conscious that I have not  
"clean hands" - However, the late  
disastrous Conflagration, brought you  
often to my mind, tho I must confess  
to a sort of selfish consolation  
in the reflection that you would not,  
personally, be sharers in the widely  
spread loss & desolation - Only last  
night, I read in a paper, that the hope  
to which I have clung, is quite

delusive, & that you are, in fact,  
direct sufferers, by this afflictive visi-  
tation - I see it stated that your  
University loses \$40 m. & that this  
involves a diminution of \$8 m. <sup>per ann.</sup>  
in the sum appropriated to the salaries  
of the Professors! I trust this may be  
an exaggeration, since it is manifest  
that the statement cannot be exactly  
correct, ~~at~~ <sup>at</sup> the loss of Capital raised,  
could by no means describe such an  
annual revenue - except at the exor-  
bitant interest of 20 per cent! I trust  
therefore, it may not be quite so bad,  
tho I confess I am anxious to learn  
that you are not subjected to any  
privations, trenching, materially, on  
your Comforts - Altogether, it is a  
most distressing calamity, & I find it  
hard to realize how the solid building  
of Boston, should have crumbled away  
like paper, in the very face, & in  
spite of the exertions of so energetic

a population as the City contains - It is,  
I hope, needless to tell you that I sym-  
pathize sincerely with you - be your per-  
sonal losses more or less - I fear that poor  
"Pat" William, & your other worthy relatives  
must all have suffered, in greater or less  
degree - I beg my kind regards to such of them  
as may still remember me - To quit the  
painful subject, which is the more im-  
mediate occasion of my letter, you will  
like to hear a word of my ménage.  
We are, thank God, all well, tho I, of  
course, am feeling more conscious of  
the infirmities of my advanced age -  
Still - I have great cause for thankfulness,  
that - Senility, notwithstanding - I am  
in reasonably good health, & still able  
to walk about without inconvenience  
indeed (sub modo) with much comfort -  
My Annette is sitting by me, at her piano  
& begs kind regards to you, & have to dear  
Mrs. Gray - in which good wishes my  
sister Emma cordially unites - Mr. Lincoln  
tho within 3 months of his 91<sup>st</sup> year! is not  
only spared to us, but is, at times, all but  
vigorous - tho materially aged, & in your

I have not been to New York for more than a year - nor met her since -

whether you have met, of late - When he last wrote - 3 weeks since - the family were leaving Newport, for their London house, in New York. - I passed the months of August & Septem<sup>r</sup>. (Herbie's vacation) at a small - very small, village on the Sea-Coast of Norfolk - but the weather was, upon the whole, cold & sun propitious, very different from what you had, in America, judging from Jo's account.

Our winter sets in, exceptionally wet - but tho I do not like this, it suits me, personally, better than frost, which tries me greatly - I garden, a little, in the summer, but keep pretty close to the house, in cold weather - I know not whether we shall agree in rejoicing at German Unity & success - For my own part, I think it for the happiness of the whole world, that some of the talons of the French Eagle should have been drawn out, & the remainder pared down to the point of safety as I hope whilst, on the other hand, I do not look upon the Germans as an aggressive people.

My kindest love is with your dear wife, & I pray, heartily, for many years of continuance - & if it may so be - of increasing happiness to you both - This is the Christmas greeting of your affectionate Mary



You will have sympathized with Hooker  
in his late disgraceful persecution by  
the first Committ<sup>ee</sup> of the board of works,  
who is certainly no favourite with the  
public - I happen to know him, perso-  
nally, as he was one of our Clients when  
I was a Broker - but, I have not seen  
him since his elevation - Indeed, I rarely  
go into the City - I might say never, except  
on business - once in about 6 or 8 weeks.  
I am very thankful to be relieved from  
the anxieties of business occupation,  
for which I am no longer fitted -

I pray you to give my kindest  
regards to the dear Doreys, & let me  
hear about them, when you write -  
I hear, monthly, from my <sup>American</sup> family,  
& am thankful to say that  
the last accounts were very good, tho'  
John does not seem to have entirely  
recovered his strength - His wife, I say,  
was never better - & the dear children  
all well - He has not told me <sup>whether</sup>  
you were in Newport, during the  
past Summer - so I know not